

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 25 MAY 2012

Question from Mr P McKay, Herefordshire

Question 1

At the Council meeting on 4 March 2011 it was agreed that Council's objective is to have complete and correct Highway Records with the Highway Records being made available for inspection online enabling Parish Councils and others to check what is recorded or not recorded, enabling positive and constructive representations to meet that objective to be made. Since that date the Local Access Forum has been advised several times that other matters are being given priority over getting the Highway Records online, with the date that this is expected being delayed. May I please ask if these other matters have been completed and if this agreed objective of getting the Highway Records online could now be given priority, and the date this could be expected?

Question from Mr P Newman, Kington, Herefordshire

Question 2

When Amey, acting on your behalf, carry out road widening etc., they remove the footpath signs in order to carry out the works but never replace the signs afterwards. This happened with the Roman Road improvements at Hereford and it took 12 months of phone calls before matters were rectified.

The same has now happened with the Stretton Sugwas road improvements near Wyevale Nurseries. I rang Amey when the works were taking place asking that the sign at the entrance to Footpath BT11 be replaced and when this did not happen I followed up, to no avail. Can this sign for footpath BT11 be sorted out and what can be done to prevent similar occurrences in future?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 25 MAY 2012

Question from Mr P Mitchell, Herefordshire

Question 3

The question arises from concern over the Council decision which appears to allocate significant public funds and assets to the ESG developer at the Council Tax Payers expense. Enabling infrastructure and facilitation / paying for site provision normally funded by the developer are in this instance being provided / paid for by the Council Tax Payer. The value of benefits and returns provided to the public in return for this are not readily evident.

“In the interests of demonstrating the Council Leaders press claim that the sanctioned ESGD offers best value for money to the Council Tax Payer I request the Council now substantiate this by providing disclosure to this meeting the anticipated full financial value of all public spend and asset provisions to support this commercial development together with the associated benefits and the value of financial returns which are provided from this scheme to the public in return?”

In the interests of openness, transparency and accountability this valuation and any associated supporting reports should be placed in the public domain and detail all public expenditure, assets provided, returns arising and benefits attributable and should include but not be restricted to the following:

- Cost of all works provided from the public purse in enabling the ESGD (including link road and other infrastructure and re-provision of public and private facilities displaced by it - such as the livestock market, police HQ and where applicable any other public or private undertakings).
- Value of assets, acquired or already owned, provided to the scheme by the Council or other public body – either in making the ESGD site available to the developer or any other assets assigned or provided in enabling re-provision of any displaced facilities. (Include estimates of those not yet finalized).
- Cost (estimated or otherwise) of all associated compensations arising to the public pursue to facilitate making the ESGD site available to the developer or arising from re-provision of displaced facilities.
- Cost of all financing debt and of Council funding reserves used to support this scheme from the public purse.
- Cost to completion of publicly funded resources provided to enable Council support for this scheme (including internal resources and external consultancy).
- Register of risks (beneficial and adverse) with cost / benefit arising from the scheme and strategy and allocation to protect the public pursue. Sensitivity analysis of their potential impact to scheme and management of outcome to the public pursue.
- Any income arising to the benefit of the public purse associated with this scheme including rates, rents or other ongoing returns arising from all of the above facilities or assets provided from the public pursue to support this scheme.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 25 MAY 2012

- Other anticipated finance received in the form of capital or income, from the developer or others such as share of returns arising from the redevelopment to the benefit of the public pursue.
- Rate of return established from any discounted cash flow assessment or similar decision making tool or criteria the Council has used in committing to this scheme.
- Net cost or benefit in terms of effect upon the Council tax payer levy of the whole scheme described above.

A justification of this decision should also be provided in priority of this scheme over others by way of comparative assessment of benefit of alternative new development, maintenance and other operational spend options competing for use of this public money.

This investment appraisal information should be routinely updated and published for public view to show performance of this investment against Council expectation.”

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 25 MAY 2012

Question from Mr M Everitt, Malvern

Question 4

This question concerns the service provided for Public Rights of Way and particularly for applications to change the Public Rights of Way network using the Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) procedure or the Public Path Order (PPO) procedure.

For many years Herefordshire has had a backlog of more than 100 DMMOs with a significant number of them being more than 12 years old. A report to the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 13 July 2010 said that 'Whilst the Council had a statutory duty to accept and process applications for DMMOs there is no such duty as regards PPOs'. The report then advised that the discretionary PPO work would be contracted out at applicants' expense in order to free up resources for the statutory DMMO work. However an update to the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 28 February 2011 advised that such good progress had been made in dealing with the PPOs that the plan to contract out PPO work was no longer necessary. The report implied it was still possible to manage the PPO work and also to allocate additional (?) resources to DMMO work although two new areas of work had been placed on the team!

According to figures given to the Local Access Forum, there has effectively been no improvement in the DMMO backlog since February 2011 in that the backlog has only fallen from 105 to 104. Moreover, although the PPO backlog has reduced from 76 to 61, this backlog still represents a significant workload and demand for resources.

Could the Cabinet Member, who in a recent letter to the Local Access Forum advised that the measures being put in place would have only a marginal effect on the DMMO backlog, please explain why Herefordshire continues to allocate some of its suitable resources to the discretionary PPO work rather than using those resources to deal with its statutory duty to process DMMO applications?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 25 MAY 2012

Question from Mr R Branczik, Malvern

Question 5

Herefordshire Council is to be commended for its scheme offering One to One Adult Cycle Training through its Sustainable Travel team.

How many councillors have taken up the opportunity to get first-hand experience of the training and so be in an ideal position to recommend it to their constituents and, in particular, has Cllr Blackshaw himself yet benefited from this excellent scheme in his cabinet portfolio?

Question from Mr J Faulkner, Hereford

Question 6

Composition of traffic on Hereford's road network

The Council's bid to the Department for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund attributes peak hour congestion to the fact that 'the city's highway network must accommodate both long distance and local traffic.' (p4)

What percentage of traffic on the road network within the city of Hereford during peak hour (a.m. and p.m.) is 'local' (and please define 'local' as used in the Destination Hereford Local Sustainable Transport Fund application)?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 25 MAY 2012

Question from Mr P Linnell, Hereford

Question 7

Council smallholding and forestry assets

What is the area of agricultural, horticultural and forestry land owned by Herefordshire Council and what is the Council's current policy on disposing of such land?

Question from Mrs E Morawiecka, Hereford

Question 8

Is it appropriate that a private company, which is now fully funded by Herefordshire Council, has Articles of Association allowing directors to have conflicts of interest, something completely contrary to the Herefordshire Council Constitution for both employees and elected members?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 25 MAY 2012

Question from Ms P Mitchell, Hereford

Question 9

LTP capital spending on cycling infrastructure in Hereford 2009-2015

What has been or will be the LTP capital spend on cycle infrastructure within Hereford City for each financial year between 2009/10 and 2014/15? (Please list city cycle schemes progressed or to be progressed in each year)?

Question from Mr A Fisher, Hereford

Question 10

The Council is providing Personalised Travel Planning to households in Hereford over the next 3 years in order to establish the residents travel requirements and offer information and advice on travel options available for their journeys, as well as offering incentives to change their travel behaviour.

In the course of these face-to-face sessions, what questions are the Council's Personal Travel Planners asking in order to ascertain residents' cycling requirements and their views of the safety and comfort of cycling in Hereford? (Please give the text of the questions about cycling asked in the standardised interview.)

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 25 MAY 2012

Question from Mrs J Morris, Hereford

Question 11

I refer to the minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny committee meeting on 9 December 2011 which considered the autumn 2011 Local Development Framework consultation. These clearly state that, when asked about changes to the Council agreed timetable for 2011 for the preparation of the LDF and LTP, officers stated that, the timetables "were necessarily kept under review and changes had been made by officers in discussion with the relevant Cabinet member".

If the full council spend time in agreeing a new timetable for the LDF, as reported, who would this be binding on?

Question from Mr T Straker, Hereford

Question 12

I understand that the Council intends to build 16,500 new homes in Herefordshire over the next 20 years, as previously outlined in the Regional Spatial Strategy. Would you please let me know what proportion of these new homes and associated businesses, services and infrastructure the Council proposes to allocate through the neighbourhood planning process, introduced under the Localism Act?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 25 MAY 2012

Question from Ms A Sancha, Breinton, Hereford

Question 13

A compulsory purchase order (CPO) for the "Hereford Link Road" is scheduled to go to Cabinet on the 14 June 2012, when there is no properly funded and up to date Local Transport Plan. Many elements of the current LTP that were to support the Link Road and the Old Livestock Market retail development, such as the park and ride schemes and city cycle routes, have been removed to save costs, but this negates any benefit this road will bring to congestion in Hereford. The LTP3 has been timetabled to be considered by full council just a few weeks later than the CPO. At a cost of £27million to the local taxpayer, which the Council need to borrow, why isn't this CPO being deferred until a coherent, up to date and fully funded transport strategy has been agreed by the Full Council?

Question from Mrs V Wegg-Prosser Breinton, Hereford

Question 14

On 7 November 2011, at a public meeting held in Whitecross School, Councillor Jarvis agreed to meet a group of local residents to discuss the issue of bed shortages in the County Hospital. This group formulated a list of questions, the answers to which would form the basis of the agreed Agenda for the meeting - questions such as 'On how many days in the last year has bed occupancy been over 95%?'

Given the continuing concern over bed shortages, most recently expressed at Overview and Scrutiny on 5 March 2012, when will Councillor Jarvis arrange to hold this meeting?

Question from Mr B Wallace, Breinton, Hereford

Question 15

*Since **Widemarsh Street** was completely redesigned with trip hazards, how many personal injury accidents have been reported and recorded on this particular street in Hereford?*